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SPEECH  
OF  
SENATOR PHILANDER C. KNOX  
OF  
PENNSYLVANIA  
AT  
PITTSBURG, PENNSYLVANIA  
NOVEMBER 5<sup>TH</sup>, 1904



*Speech of Senator Philander C. Knox*

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If it were not for the provision of the Constitution which requires the American people once in four years to elect a President and Vice President of the United States we would not now be closing a National campaign.

A great English newspaper recently said of American politics that an election and an issue do not always come at the same time. "It may be that they do. In 1896, for instance, an election and an issue had the rare good fortune to be on the same spot at the same time. In 1900, though the election punctually put in its appearance, there was only the tail end of an issue waiting to receive it. In 1904 it is not too much to say there is just an election and nothing else."

This impartial outside comment upon the situation is apt and almost accurate. To it might be added the observation that the Democratic party seizes the opportunity for a change in government administration and asks, for no other well defined reason than that the opportunity exists, that the people repudiate the party whose policies they approve and whose performances they applaud, and substitute the party whose performances they con-

demn and whose policies are erratic, inconsistent and unsound.

We now stand well towards the end of the last half of the last year of the eight years of the McKinley-Roosevelt administration. They have been years of undreamed-of development and prosperity at home, and, barring our war with Spain for the liberation of Cuba and its sequelae, years of peace and amity in our foreign relations.

What is there to advance to a reasonable man to induce him to desire a change?

Would our prosperity, happiness, honor and power been more abundant or more stably fixed under other policies than those pursued by the Republican party?

Do you believe the leaders of the Democracy are better fitted by temperament, experience and wisdom to administer our government?

As men can answer these questions so should they vote.

I can, in the short time allotted me to-night, but touch these great subjects of policies and men.

As the prosperity and happiness of a people depend upon steady and remunerative employment a first place must be given to the Republican policy of protection which guards and develops our industries. To this policy our party stands against all comers. We do not think that protection is robbery either in theory or fact, as alleged in the Democratic platform.



The benefits of the policy of protection are national. The argument for free trade is based upon assumptions which cannot be established and which the experience of other nations proves to be erroneous.

Along with the policy of protection there should stand high in the estimation of the American people the policy of equality of opportunity for all in our industrial and commercial life which this administration has done so much to advance. Monopolies and conspiracies against trade by which a few men obtained advantages on the highways of commerce, which should be open to all alike, have been successfully assailed by President Roosevelt in the Courts and in the halls of legislation.

The Democratic platform says: "We especially denounce rebates and discriminations by transportation companies as the most potent agency in promoting and strengthening these unlawful conspiracies against trade."

I cheerfully accede to this because it is sound Republican doctrine.

I had the honor to announce in this city in October, 1902, that it was the policy of this administration that such nefarious practices should be broken up, and they have been almost entirely destroyed during the last three years.

First the Government succeeded in establishing in the courts that the Government itself could enjoin the granting of rebates and it did so effectually

to the immediate relief of the farmers of the West. Next an Act of Congress was passed which made it equally unlawful to solicit and receive, as well as to grant, unfair advantages of any kind from or by common carriers. No law in any country is more far reaching in this respect than the one to which I refer, and with power in the Government to enforce it for the benefit of the citizens and jurisdiction in the courts to reach the evil by the swift remedy of injunction it is difficult to imagine what more can be desired.

The Government, under President Roosevelt's administration, has brought to the test of judicial decision many of the practices of shrewd men designed to defeat the wholesome policy of the law to prevent the monopolization and restraint of trade and commerce, and it has succeeded in its contentions thus far. It is a matter of history that within the past three years the Republican party has done more through legislation and in securing judicial interpretation of the law to establish a system of law for the proper regulation of interstate commerce and its instrumentalities than the Democracy ever accomplished during its existence.

It is scarcely worth while now to discuss the policies of the Republican party either by expanding upon their demonstrated merits or by instituting comparisons with results to the country of short periods of Democratic rule.

The exigencies of a losing campaign have

driven our adversaries in these concluding days of the contest to substantially abandon the attempt to convince the people that they stand for anything better in the way of governmental policies than we do, and we now have the humiliating spectacle of a candidate for the Presidency of the United States going up and down the land deriding his opponent and repeating slanderous tales of such a preposterous character that the party organs which originated them had, until fathered by the candidate himself, almost abandoned them for very shame.

It is perfectly legitimate to challenge the acts of President Roosevelt's administration if one does not agree with them. There are people who would pull down the flag in the Philippines and abandon that archipelago which represents to this country the blood of the martyred sailors of the "Maine." There are those whose indecision and lack of international sense would have prevented them from seeing and doing their duty by this country and the world in the Panama affair. There are those who would have been too timid or too politic to have challenged the men behind the Northern Securities Company. There are those, and many of them, who would revive the attack upon our fiscal policies; and in respect to all these matters their views are entitled to respectful consideration and temperate reply.

But when it is said of Theodore Roosevelt, a man who has so concededly kept the "terms of his honor

precise," that he has knowledge of, connives at or abets "the demanding of campaign funds," with "compromising with decency in order that sums of money may be gathered together," or "with levying contributions in Wall Street upon timid and grasping industries," then it is indeed time to call his slanderers to account, as in ordinary cases.

The man who makes these charges, and I have used his own words, is the candidate of the Democratic party for Presidency of the United States, Alton B. Parker, a hitherto respectable and respected judge and gentleman, but as a candidate, the product of a compromise between Tammany Hall, William R. Hearst, David B. Hill, W. J. Bryan, the solid South and the worst element in Wall Street. He was syndicated for the purpose of taking advantage of an alleged adverse feeling in business circles towards President Roosevelt because he had enforced the provisions of the anti-trust law.

What a pitiful fall it was when this dignified gentleman was persuaded to abandon his declared purpose of following the illustrious McKinley as a model in his campaign, and was induced to repeat and enlarge upon the base slanders of degraded partisanship.

Does not every man in America know that the hold that Theodore Roosevelt has upon the hearts and respect of his countrymen is largely because of his love of fair play and his courage to see

that there is fair play; because in his eyes a rich man is just as big as a poor man and no bigger; because neither threats nor coaxing could prevent him from enforcing the law when the law breakers were the richest, most powerful and most influential men in the land.

Let us examine these charges of Judge Parker for the purpose of discovering their nature and scope and then let us look at the evidence upon which they rest and the character of the witnesses from which that evidence proceeds.

Judge Parker's first charge is to be found in his speech at Esopus on October 24th. These are his words: "These interests (the trusts) have decided to attempt to continue the present administration in power. Their representatives scolded about the President for some months and thus contributed their part toward the effort which was assiduously made to satisfy the country that the trusts were opposed to the present administration. Their action being but a play to deceive the voters, the fact remains the trusts are not now opposed to the continuance of the present administration. On the contrary it is common knowledge that they have determined to furnish such a sum of money to the Republican National Committee as it is hoped will secure the 'floaters' in the doubtful States for the Republican ticket."

This is a specific allegation of friendly collusion between the President and the trusts for the pur-

pose of securing his re-election, and that as a part and parcel of the program of fraud and deceit the antagonism between the President and the trusts had been simulated to mislead the voters, but back of this sham was the fixed purpose of the trusts to secure his election through the contribution of large sums of money.

You will note without the necessity of my commenting upon it how wholly opposed to this statement of Judge Parker and to his allegations of fact are the words used by him in his speech in Madison Square Garden on the 31st of October, or just one week later.

He abandons the idea of friendly collusion and harmony of purpose between President Roosevelt and the trusts and sets out a wholly different statement of facts as supporting his new theory that contributions made to the Republican campaign fund are the results of coercion, forced contribution and demand. These are the words of his more recent statement, "the spectacle of demanding campaign funds now presented to this country is one rightly to be regarded of a character to shock the moral sense," "you do not belong to that order of business men who levy contributions in Wall Street upon timid and grasping industries. You are not compelled, on the other hand, to purchase immunity for some wrong-doing, either actual or prospective, or to compound some offense committed in the past or contemplated in the future," "the



whole performance is a shameless exhibition of a willingness to make compromise with decency in order that sums of money may be gathered together."

As I have said, Judge Parker's first charge against the President is one of wicked and deceitful collusion, the second one of infamous blackmail, and while they are wholly inconsistent with each other, their inconsistency is not so much a matter of concern as it is that these allegations should be substantiated or the penalty for malicious slander meted out to their author.

Judge Parker says he makes these charges with reluctance, but because he knows them to be true. If he has any such knowledge he owes it to himself, he owes it to his party, he owes it to his country, to produce his proofs. If he can establish to the satisfaction of the American people that President Roosevelt has conspired with the trusts to secure his election, or that by any species of duress worked out through the Chairman of the National Committee and the Bureau of Corporations he has exacted campaign funds for the Republican party, or that he has sold indulgences to violate the law in the future, or compounded offenses committed in the past, he will without doubt make sure his election and have defeated a candidate wholly unworthy of the votes of honest freemen. But, my fellow citizens, there is no such evidence. There can be none.

It is just as absurd to suppose that these things can be true as it would be to suppose that Judge Parker can sustain his allegations and for any reason refuse to do so.

The President has met these monstrous accusations, just as the people of the United States would wish him to do, with the dignified scorn becoming a man respected and honored enough to receive at the hands of the great majority of his fellow citizens a unanimous nomination for his exalted office induced by an appreciation of his honorable career.

This country has not yet adopted the star chamber rule that the burden of proof is on the accused.

What is the reputation of the accusing witness for careless and unwarranted statement?

I cannot more concisely answer this question than in the words of an editorial in the *New York Tribune* of November 1st, wherein Judge Parker's attention is called to the fact—

“That he has monstrously exaggerated the amount of money spent and the number of lives lost in governing the Philippines.

“That he has gravely misrepresented the facts as to national expenditures and the deficit.

“That when he accused the administration of suppressing department estimates and declared it was impossible to ascertain how the



revenues were being expended he was densely and culpably ignorant.

"That when he quoted McKinley on reciprocal trade arrangements he garbled and distorted the Buffalo speech of September 5, 1901.

"That in the effort to sustain his original blunder in respect to the common law and the trusts he smartly cited a decision of the Supreme Court which at once proved to be irrelevant.

"That the President's pension order, which he condemned as an encroachment on the legislative power and therefore unwarranted by the Constitution, was strictly within the law and amply supported by precedents, both Republican and Democratic.

"That the statement for which he made himself responsible, describing the condition of things in the Philippines as hideous and disgraceful to this country, has been refuted on the highest authority, and that in snatching at the testimony of a single witness, whose claims to impartiality and importance became ridiculous the moment his name was known, the late Chief Judge of the Court of Appeals caricatured the principles by which he is supposed to have been guided on the bench."

It is a matter of common notoriety that the Chairman of the Democratic National Committee

was chosen because it was hoped to carry Indiana for Judge Parker by the very methods he now affects to deplore. It is likewise a matter of common notoriety that Messrs. Hill, Belmont, Ryan, Sheehan and McCarren, who are Judge Parker's chief backers, can only be such in the very way in which Judge Parker now professes to attack. It is also a legitimate deduction from the facts that Judge Parker is making this false appeal to cover the fact that he and his people are gathering in money which they expect to use unstintingly in New York, Indiana, West Virginia, New Jersey and Connecticut.

As Judge Parker is not above such methods and has personally been party thereto, I quote from the New York *Evening Post*, one of his most enthusiastic organs, the following from its issue of February 6th, 1892 :—

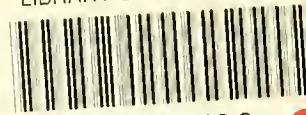
“In 1888 the scandals about the doings of the Aqueduct Commission became so great that an investigation was ordered by the Senate. It was shown by unimpeachable testimony that in the campaign for his own reelection in 1885 Governor Hill had drawn two notes, one for \$10,000 and the other for \$5,000, the proceeds of which had been used to defray campaign expenses. The first was drawn to the order of William L. Muller, and was indorsed by Muller and by John O'Brien and Heman Clark, the two heaviest contractors for

aqueduct work. The note was cashed by O'Brien and charged to him on the books of the firm. *The second note was indorsed by Muller and Alton B. Parker, and was cashed by John Keenan, the alleged 'boodle holder' in the Broadway Railway scandal. Keenan was afterward repaid by John O'Brien. Mr. O'Brien contributed \$500, Alton B. Parker \$500 and other friends of the Governor similar amounts. It was to pay these notes that the contract was awarded to Clark & O'Brien, though their bid was \$54,000 above the lowest, for Mayor Grace and Squire (Commissioner of Public Works) testified that they were asked to vote in favor of that bid in order that the Governor's notes might be paid. The testimony also showed that both notes were finally paid by O'Brien and Clark, presumably out of the \$30,000 profit made on that bid."*





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